

THE LITERARY FOCUS.

"Stilus optimus, et præstantissimus dicendi effector ac magister."

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[The following beautiful tale, from the London Magazine, was republished in the Philadelphia Museum of March, 1825. It is both interesting and instructive: interesting from the captivating style in which its varied incidents are related; instructive, from the excellent picture which it gives of Eastern scenes and manners.]

THE POWER OF BEAUTY.

A SYRIAN TALE.

Not far from the banks of the Orontes, and aloof from any other habitation, stood a Syrian cottage, where dwelt a peasant, his wife, and only son. It was the daily employment of the latter to lead the few sheep of his father to the hills, where the wild and sweet notes of his Syrian pipe often cheered the traveller on his way: the caravans travelling from Damascus to Bagdad sometimes passed by, and purchased of his father's flock; and nothing could exceed the joy of Semid when he heard the camel bell, and the mournful chaunt of the Arab driver, and saw the long train of the caravan winding up the mountain path. He would then listen with delight to the tales of these travellers of the desert, and longed to accompany them on their way; but when he returned to the cottage, when the fire was kindled on the rude floor, the unleavened cake baked in the embers, and the milk, fruit and honey from the hills, formed their repast; when he heard his parents say, in words of affection, that he was their only support and joy, he reproached himself for having ever cherished the thought of leaving them. But one night there arose a violent storm; the Orontes overflowed its banks, the blast came

wild and furious from the desert beyond, and moaned through the lonely group of fig trees around the cottage with a sound as of destruction. Amidst the darkness and beating of the rain was heard a voice of distress that seemed to implore admission and shelter. Semid arose, and on opening the door, a venerable man entered, whose green turban and toil worn features proclaimed him to be a Hadgi, or pilgrim from Mecca; his beard descended nearly to his girdle, and overcome by fatigue and the violence of the storm, he threw himself on the coarse carpet which was spread for him, and hung over the blazing fire; and when he had drunk of the coffee presented him, his faded looks brightened with joy, and at last he broke silence, and gave the blessing of a Hadgi, and adored the goodness of Allah. The storm was hushed, the moon light came through the lattice window of the cottage: the pilgrim knelt, and folding his hands on his breast—he prayed, fixing his eyes on the earth with intense devotion; he thrice pressed his forehead on the ground, and then stood, with his face to Mecca, and invoked the prophet.

Semid gazed on the stranger—he could be no wandering dervise; his aspect and manner were far superior to the poverty of his dress, and on the hem of his garment was embroidered that passage from the Koran, fit only for the good.—The next and several following days the Hadgi was still a welcome guest; he had been a long and restless traveller, and when Semid was seated by his side in the rude portico of the cot-

tage, as the sun was setting on the Orontes, and the wild mountains around, and he had given the chibouque into his hands, he drank in with insatiable delight every tale of wandering and peril on the wave and the wilderness which the other related. At last the day of his departure came, and Semid wept bitterly as he clasped the hand of the stranger, who, during his short stay, had become deeply attached to him, and who now turned to the father and mother, and raised his right hand to heaven, and attested his words by the name of Allah. "I am alone," he said, "in the world; the shaft of death has stricken from my side relative and friend; as I have beheld the Euphrates rush on its solitary course through the wild, that once flowed through the glory and light of the bowers of Eden. Yet suffer your son to cheer and brighten my way, and I will be to him both parent and counsellor; he shall partake of my wealth, and when three years have passed over our heads, he shall return to bless your declining years. It was long before the parents of Semid would consent to this proposal, but at last the prospect of their son's advancement, and of his return, endowed with knowledge and wealth, wrung a reluctant assent.—The sun's rays had not penetrated through the grove of fig-trees that shadowed his home, when the youth and his companion directed their course across the plain, and on the third day entered the thick forests which terminated it, sleeping at night beneath the trees around the fire they had kindled. The toil of the way was lightened by the converse of the moslem, which was full of instruction and delight, yet mingled with much that was strange and wild, of genii, the power of evil and good spirits, and the marvellous events he had met with in his varied path. But he knew not that that path was so soon to be closed. One night, over-

come by fatigue, and the excessive heat of the way, they had sunk to sleep in the wood, without taking the precaution of kindling a fire.—In the middle of the night Semid was awakened by a piercing shriek, and hastening to his companion, found he had been bitten by a serpent, whose wound was mortal; already the poison began to circulate thro' his veins, his limbs trembled, his face was flushed with crimson, and his eyes had a fatal lustre. He clasped the hand of the youth convulsively in his own, and pressed it to his heart. "O my son," he said, "Allah has called me at the midnight hour, and the angel of death has put his cup to my lips ere I thought it was prepared; and thou art left solitary like a bride widowed on her marriage morn:—thy friend and guide torn from thee, what will be thy fate?—and the wealth that would have been thine will now be scattered amongst strangers." He paused and seemed lost in thought: the young Syrian supported his dying head upon his knees, and his tears fell fast on the face that was soon to be shrouded from him for ever. Suddenly the old man drew forth from his bosom a memorial of his affection, that was indeed indelible, and fixing his look intensely on his friend, "Semid," he said, "I have hesitated whether to consign to you this ring, and darkness is on my spirit as to the result. Place this ring on your finger, and it will invest you with surpassing beauty of feature and form, which, if rightly used, will conduct you to honor and happiness; but if abused for the purpose of vicious indulgence, will make sorrow and remorse your portion through life." He fainted, but reviving once more, "Turn my face to Mecca," he cried, "to the tomb of my prophet;" and striving to fix his eyes on the east, "I come, O loved of Allah—the dark realms of Eblis shall not be my home, nor El Arat have any ter-

rors for me: thrice have these feet compassed the Caaba, where rest thy ashes; thrice to arrive there have they trod the burning desert, where thy promises were sweeter to me than the fountain or the shadow—receive me to thy paradise!"—He sank back, and died. All night the Syrian boy mourned loudly over the body of his benefactor; and the next day watched over it till sunset, when he dug a rude grave and interred it.—Early on the second morning he pursued his way through the forest, and the sun was hot on the plain beyond, ere he advanced from its gloomy recesses.—He had placed the ring, of a green color and without ornament, on his finger, and already amidst his grief for the loss of his friend, his heart swelled with vanity at the many advantages it had given him.—Oppressed with heat he drew near to where a fountain gushed forth beneath a few palm trees on the plain, and formed a limpid pool; he stooped to drink, but started back at beholding the change a few hours had made. The sun-burnt features of the shepherd boy had given place to a countenance of dazzling fairness and beauty; the dark ringlets clustered on the pure forehead over still darker eyes, whose look was irresistible; his step became haughty as he pursued his way, and saw each passenger fix on him a gaze of admiration, and he glanced with disdain on his coarse peasant's dress.

The sun was setting on the splendid mosques and gilded minarets of the city of Damascus, now full in view, when a numerous train of horsemen drew near; it was Hussein, the son of the Pacha, returning from the course. Struck at the sight of one so meanly clad, yet so extremely beautiful, he stopped and demanded whence he came and whither he was journeying; on Semid replying he was friendless and a stranger, he bade him follow in his train, and add-

ed that on the morrow he should become one of his own guards. The next day, in his military habit, and rich arms, and mounted on a fine Arab courser, he rode by the prince's side. Each day now saw some improvement in the shepherd of the Orontes; possessing by nature a quick imagination, and an enterprising spirit, he made a rapid progress in the accomplishments of the court of Damascus.—Speedily promoted by Hussein, whose favorite he had become, and admired by all for the exquisite personal advantages he possessed; he joined with those of his own rank in every amusement the city afforded. Sometimes they passed the hours in the superb coffee-houses, where the fountain spouted forth a lofty column of water, and the coolness and incessant murmur were delightful amidst the sultry heats—or on one of the light pleasure houses built on piles in the midst of the rivers which rushed through the city, they sat at night on soft cushions, and coffee, sherbet, and other luxuries were served; and while the moonlight, mingled with the glare of lamps, fell on the scene they listened to the music and gazed on the voluptuous dance of the Almei girls.—Amidst scenes like these the memory of his father and mother, the lonely cottage on the river's bank, his few sheep, and his mountain solitudes, grew more and more faint; all love for simplicity and innocence of life was lost irretrievably, and the senses were prepared to yield to the first seduction. The favorite mistress of Hussein, a beautiful Circassian, had one morning, while walking beneath the sycamore trees by the river's side, seen Semid playing at the jerrid with the prince, and his uncommon loveliness of countenance and noble figure had inspired her with a violent passion. One day, as he sat beneath the portico of a coffee-house, one of those women approached him whose employment it is to sell nosegays of

flowers to the Turkish ladies; she drew one from her basket, and put it into his hand; the various flowers were so arranged as to convey a message of love from that lady, the fame of whose charms filled the whole city. Deeply flattered as the heart of Semid was at this discovery, and filled with intense curiosity to behold such perfections, he still hesitated; gratitude to his benefactor Hussein; the memory of the lessons of piety so often received from his parents; the dying words of the pilgrim of Mecca; all conspired to deter him. But to be the object of the love of such a woman, and solicited to behold her!—the thought was irresistible. Night came, and the last call to prayer of the Muezzin from the minaret had ceased, when, disguised, he climbed the lofty wall that encircled the harem of the prince, and gliding through the garden, was admitted by one of the eunuchs, who conducted him through several apartments into the one that was the abode of the favourite. The moon-light came faintly through the windows of richly stained glass, and showed indistinctly the gold characters from the Koran inscribed beneath—the exquisite perfume which filled the air, and the lulling murmur of the fountain gushing on the rich marble, stole on the senses with seductive power—the upper part, or divan, of the Serai, was covered with the costly silks, carpets, and brocades of Persia and Damascus, with numerous sofas, cushions, and superb mirrors—and at the end of all, where the small cluster of silver lamps threw their light on an ottoman of crimson velvet and gold, reclined the young and haughty Circassian. She wore a blue Cashmere turban, clasped on her high and fair forehead by a wreath of diamonds, and beneath fell the raven ringlets of her hair, which were just suffered to rest on the right shoulder—the vest that confined the bosom, as if to contrast

with its exquisite whiteness, was of black, and this was circled by a golden girdle—her right arm, the tunic thrown back, lay moveless like a wreath of snow on the dark ottoman, and on the left arm languidly rested her beautiful cheek, whose natural paleness was now flushed—and the drooping eye-lash tinged with surmeh, could not shroud the glance that flashed irresistibly from beneath, while the full and crimson lips, unlike the Grecian outline, were just parted by an unconscious smile at sight of the beloved form that stood before her. Dazzled at the sight of such excessive beauty, Semid stood motionless, unable to advance, or withdraw his eyes from the Circassian, who rose from her reclining posture, and waved her hand for him to be seated on the ottoman beside her. Scarcely had he obeyed her, and recovering from his confusion, begun to declare the passion he felt, when the loud sound of voices and steps rapidly approaching the Serai was heard. Semid started up, and paralyzed by his feelings, gazed alternately at the lady, and at the door, through which he every moment expected the guards to burst with the sentence of death. In the agony of her fear, she clasped his hand so convulsively in hers, as, on his sudden starting from her side, to draw unconsciously the green ring from his finger.

At that moment she uttered a loud cry, and fixed her dark eyes on him, but their expression was—no longer love; in place of the beautiful and matchless Semid, stood before her a venerable man, in appearance like an Imaun; his beard hung down to his girdle, his thin grey locks were scattered over his wrinkled front, and his look was sad and imploring. Just at this instant, Hussein and his attendants burst into the apartment, and searched in vain with bitter imprecations for the traitor Semid; the stranger, whose appear-

ance bespoke him either a Hakim, or physician, or a teacher of religion, was suffered to depart unmolested. He rushed wildly into the streets of the city—they were silent and deserted, for every inhabitant had retired to rest; but there was no rest for the soul of Semid, no calm for the hopeless sorrow and devouring despair which now agitated it; he had cast from him forever the only gift that would have raised him in the career of life, and when he gazed on his withered form, felt his limbs tremble, and the chill blast wave his white locks, he lifted his staff towards heaven, and cursed the hour when the stranger's steps came to the cottage of his father; and the still more fatal seduction of beauty which now left shame and wretchedness his only portion. He paced incessantly the empty streets, which returned no sound save his own step, till the day dawned, and the numerous population began to appear, and the coffee houses to fill, when he hurried into the retreats of the gardens. Worn out with fatigue and anguish, he fell fast asleep beneath the trees, but that sleep was worse than waking; the Circassian knelt before him, her beautiful tresses sweeping the ground, and raised her look to his with love and tenderness unutterable—he clasped her to his bosom, when she suddenly broke from his arms, scorn and indignation flashed from her eyes, and the sounds that rang in his ears as he awoke were her curse and laugh of mockery and contempt. It was mid-day, and many had sought shelter from the sultry heat beneath the orange and citron trees around; sherbet and coffee were supplied by some of the sellers who had arranged their small shops on the spot. Semid gazed wildly on the various groupes, for among them he discovered some of his dearest intimates; he would have rushed towards them, to share in their gay converse, to hear from

their lips, perhaps, some words of consolation; but his robe was pulled by some children, who gazing up at the venerable and striking features of him they took for an Imaun, besought his blessing. "Blessing from me!" cried Semid; the thought was to his soul more bitter than the Erak tree to the famished traveller. "O Allah, who hast quenched the light of my path suddenly, and crushed me by thy doom: had I sunk slowly from youth to decrepitude, the rich pleasures of the world would have passed gently from my grasp: but yesterday, strength and glorious beauty were in this frame, and now it bends into the tomb; the friends of my soul pass me in their pride, and know me not. Who now shall love the wretched Semid?" He bent his steps towards the city and sought an obscure lodging; he shunned the crowded streets and sweet promenades by the river side, and retired to a cottage in the gardens near the city, that was shrouded by the mass of cypress and fruit trees amidst which it stood. Here, as solitude became more familiar to him, he began to regard the utter desolation of his condition with less anguish of spirit: at evening, he sometimes frequented the places, where the Imauns, the Muftis, and the learned of the city, associated; among these venerable men, his appearance ensured him respect; in their conversations on the deep things of religion, of nature, and of destiny, his mind became expanded and animated; he devoted his daily solitude to the study of the Koran, of medicine, and of other sciences, with such success, that he became in time famous throughout the city; and the learned Imaun was admired, and listened to by all:—while others hung on the words that fell from his lips, while the aged were silent, and the gay and thoughtless composed before him, new sources of consolation opened to his spirit, new motives attached

him to life. Even then, as he passed by the splendid palaces in which his presence was once courted, and heard the sounds of joy within, and bitterer than all, than even the despairing gloom of the halls of Eblis, when woman's haughty step and look of resistless beauty, that sought him with allurements and delight, were now turned from the decayed Imaun with pity and aversion; he felt misery that wisdom was unavailing to cure. To fly from these scenes he resolved to quit Damascus forever; and at sunrise he issued out of the northern gate that conducts to Haleb. All the day he pursued his journey, and at night always found a kind welcome in the Syrian cottages. On the fifth evening the sky shewed a fire and unusual splendor; and night quickly came down on the scene, ushering in one of those furious tempests which arise so suddenly in the east: the rain fell in torrents, and the deep darkness was only broken by the lightning that flashed on the mountain path of Semid; he paused and listened, but there was no sound, save the loud voice of the blast as it rushed through the rocky passes, and the river foaming over its course beneath; overcome by fatigue, he despaired of reaching any place of shelter, when he suddenly perceived the light of some cottages on the declivity above. He entered one of them with the salutation "Salam Alicum," peace be to you, seldom coldly listened to; the cottagers spread for the venerable wanderer their best mat on the floor, in the midst of which the fire burned bright and cheerfully, and instantly prepared a simple repast, followed by coffee and the chibouque; the neighbors entered to sit with the stranger in token of respect and honor; the young peasants danced to the guitar and pipe, and many a mountain song was sung. Pleased at the scene of gaiety and joy, and by the kindness and veneration

shown him, the spirits of the wanderer were elevated, and he forgot his sorrows for a while, gazed on the group before him, with a delighted eye, and began to converse with so much eloquence and wisdom that the auditors listened with hushed and eager attention: he talked of the vicissitudes with which Allah visits our path of life, of death, and the scenes of beauty and everlasting bloom reserved for the faithful: when he suddenly paused—the children of the family had clasped his knees, and were gazing on his features—the sound of the torrent dashing over its rocky path had caught his ear—and that group—that hour—all brought back the vivid, the bitter memory of what had been. He clasped his hands and uttered a cry of anguish—"On such a night," he exclaimed, "came the stranger to my native home, as the Orontes rushed by in its fury; amidst the voice of the storm he prayed for shelter, and his words of melody lured me away. O my father and my mother! whose looks are bent over the desert for the steps of your son; never can you behold him again: were he to approach your door, you would thrust him away as an impostor; and his withered form would be bent in anguish over the scenes of his childhood:" and "mock not my misery with their presence," he said, as he thrust the children from him with a trembling hand. "Let me roam again through the storm and darkness, but see not their eyes bent on mine, hear not their voice calling on me, whose withering heart can never know a father's love—my childless, dark, and desolate path! O! for a mother's tears falling on this hopeless bosom—but it may not be." He bent his head to the earth, and tears streamed fast down his withered cheek; the villagers gazed with wonder at the stranger's emotion, but it grew late, and they dropped off one after another to their homes. After a

night of disturbed repose, Semid bade an early adieu to these friendly people, and pursued his journey; the day was beautiful, and descending the region of mountains, he entered on a rich and extensive plain, and at last drew near one of those Khans, built in lonely situations for the accommodation of travellers; it was divided into two stories, the lower for the camels and horses, the upper for the lodging of the merchants; and a fountain arose in the middle of the area below. Here, natives of various nations had already arrived; the Armenian and Persian, the Jew and the Tartar mingled together in the apartments, which offered no luxuries save the bare walls and floor: each spread his mat, or rich carpet, according to his wealth; lighted his fire, and the coffee being prepared, took his long pipe, and entered into animated conversation, or sat silent, lost in musing. Semid found no want of invitations to partake of their cheer; for long and lonely journeys such as these, create benevolent and kindly feelings to each other. The light had not faded on the plain, ere each traveller, fatigued, stretched himself on his mat to seek repose, and soon after dawn of the ensuing day they had pursued their various and distant routes.

The Imaun took his staff, and again bent his steps towards Haleb; a small river ran through the plain; the tents of some wandering Bedouins were pitched on its banks; their flocks were feeding beside them; and a solitary Arab was seen here and there roaming over the plain, on which his spear, his white turban and cloak, gleamed in the fierce sunlight. As Semid brooded over his sad destiny, he could not help acknowledging the justice of Allah; since, had he not yielded to guilty temptation, and fled in the face of the dying counsel of his benefactor, the wanderer from Mecca, he had

remained still happy, loved, and cared for. He gazed with joy afar off on the minarets of Haleb, as the termination of his journey, and night fell ere he entered it. The streets were silent, and he roamed through the populous city to seek a place of refreshment and rest; but as he passed by the door of a splendid palace, he heard sounds from within of distress and agony; he stopped to listen; they became louder and more hopeless, when the door suddenly opened, and many persons rushed wildly out, as if in hurried search of some one. At sight of Semid, they instantly addressed him, and drew him forward into the palace, conjuring him to quicken his steps, and exert all his skill, for that she who lay expiring was the beloved of their prince, and adored by all who approached her.

They quickly entered the superb saloon from whence issued those cries of distress; the richly painted ceiling of that chamber of luxury was supported by a double row of white marble pillars, to each of which was suspended a silver lamp; vases of orange and trees of perfume, with fountains that gushed through mouths of amber, spread coolness and odours around. But the gaze of all was fixed on a low ottoman, on which reclined helplessly a woman of exquisite beauty, her delicate limbs writhing in agony. On one white arm fell the loose tresses of her raven hair, while the other was laid on the bosom of her young and devoted husband, the Pacha of Haleb. The ravages of the poison, administered by a rival lady, were already visible on her forehead, and wan and beautiful lips; her eyes, commanding even in death, were fixed on the group around, with a look as if she mourned deeply to be thus torn from all she loved, but still scorned her rival's arts; her golden girdle was burst by the convulsive pangs that heaved her bosom—the angel of death had seized her for his

own. Every eye was turned on the venerable stranger, who had been mistaken by the attendants for a physician, and who saw instantly that all aid was vain; he took her hand in his to feel her pulse, when his finger pressed, and his glance at the same instant caught the green ring that had been the source of all his misfortunes. The Circassian suddenly raised her eyes on the venerable form before her, knew instantly her once loved but ruined Semid, and with her last look fixed full on him, she gave a deep sigh, and expired.

[Concluded in our next.]

ORIGINAL ESSAYS.

[FOR THE FOCUS.]

REPUBLICAN EDUCATION.

Messrs. Editors:

In perusing your pages, my eye has been arrested with much interesting matter; but in my research I found nothing on the system of education. With anxiety did I look through your columns, for some essay, relative to the propriety and necessity of farmers and mechanics acquiring a more extensive knowledge of the arts and sciences than they usually possess.

Hitherto, the popular sentiment has been in favour of *professional* men obtaining a liberal education; and this worthy opinion has taken such deep root in the minds of both the learned and the illiterate, that I have reason to believe, that in the course of another century a man without a liberal education will be a stranger to the inside of the pulpit or the bar. Thus far, the sentiment of the people is correct; but I still believe them to be in error, when they assert that a man has no business with an education who intends spending his life in the field or the work-shop. It is true, the wise men of our state, have seen the necessity of a more extended system of education; and, with this in view, have laid a founda-

tion for establishing a better system of common schools than has heretofore existed. This, no doubt, is good; but it is only advancing one step farther than we have hitherto gone. Then, whilst the whole community, both farmers and mechanics, are obtaining the essentials of an English education, by means of this system, cannot we plant, here and there amongst our citizens, one whose mind has been more thoroughly cultivated; who, like the spreading tree to the weary traveller, will shed comfort and refreshment upon all around him? This is what I wish instilled into the minds of the community; and while we cannot expect *all* men to receive a liberal education, we *can* expect, and we do earnestly wish a few such men in our country, who will be an extensive blessing to the people. The advantages connected with such a course are neither few nor small.

The Latin, Greek, and every science belonging to a classical education, are studied in order to get possessed of general principles, that can be made subservient to the employments of active life. Viewing the application in this light—a light in which it will be viewed by all learned men—we see at once, the necessity of farmers and mechanics being liberally educated. How often do we hear such observations as these, from the farmer or the tradesman: “I intend *my* son shall follow the plough or apply the edge-tool, through life; of what advantage will a liberal education be, to him? Can he plough nearer a stump; cut more wheat in a day; or make a better pair of shoes, or a better hat, from understanding Latin or Greek? Can he better endure the fatigues and privations incident to a life of labor, after he has spent five or six years at College and broken his constitution by close confinement?” I am ready to answer: No. But let us return, to what we consider a proper educa-

tion—a store of general knowledge. We do not read the dead languages, to discover the method in which the ancients cultivated the soil or executed any piece of mechanism; (though a majority of our farmers would do well, to follow some of the rules laid down in the ancient classics;) but we study them, as well as a number of the branches of mathematics, in order to have a good foundation laid, for the study of those things more intimately connected with the business of life—natural and moral philosophy, political economy &c. These latter branches, can be applied to the business of the day. Their application is extensive, abstractly considered from any other science.

But I would not argue, on this ground, the propriety of farmers and mechanics receiving a liberal education. If we can obtain a liberally educated man in each neighborhood, throughout our country, he is not only qualified to transact his own business better than he otherwise could, but he is an assistant to all around him. His friends, (with the exception of those, whose ignorance prompts them to believe themselves wiser than the wisest,) can resort to him, for counsel and instruction; and owing to his general knowledge of matters, he can prevent local differences from going farther than his own fire-side.

But I may be charged with being unreasonable to suppose the green headed boy, just from college, able to direct the affairs of old, experienced men—of men who have lived three-score years amidst the hurry and bustle of life. I admit the force of the objection; but I keep in view what constitutes a real education. We must recollect that the young man who has gone through a regular course of study, has not only the experience of sixty years, and that experience extending only through the small space of a few miles, or at most, a few hundred miles; but he is

in possession of the combined experience of ages, and of the whole known world. He forms a system for himself, from the experience of the wise and great who have existed since the history of man emerged from fable.

[To be continued.]

[FOR THE FOCUS.]

LES AMOURETTES, NO. I.

'There's a wee faut they whiles lay to me
I like the lasses—Gude forgie me?'—BURNS.

There is nothing which better serves to beguile a weary hour, than to recall the various incidents of boyhood—to throw a hasty glance over those chequered scenes which have flitted by in the 'hey-day of youth.' I often sit musing in this way until I imagine that time has really rolled back some half dozen of years; and I find myself sporting over the play ground, or sitting in the 'old school-house,' surrounded by my former playmates. It is then that with my 'mind's eye' I see many well known faces and recognize the smile of many an 'old crony'—features which, but for these retrospects, time would have long since erased from my memory. Among these reminiscences, my early 'love scrapes' have always held a prominent place; and an involuntary smile is often the fruit of reflection upon those many amorous adventures, of which I have been the redoubtable hero.

I have found it fully exemplified in my own case, and I believe it will hold good with all—save those characters, cool as a cucumber, whose blood has been curdled by an early frost—that there is a certain period in the life of man when he *must* love. His affections wait only for something upon which to expand themselves; and should he not meet with a suitable object upon which to bestow them, an attachment will be formed, though it should be a degrading and unworthy one. This is the era of passion and feeling, and con-

stitutes in the life of man what the Gothic ages of chivalry and romance are in the history of the world.

Previous to a detailed history of my 'hours of love', perhaps it may afford some amusement to relate a whimsical occurrence which transpired just before the commencement of my reign of Cupid. It seems I had anticipated my time, and from certain internal and heart-rending twinges which I had felt, had imbibed the idea that I was desperately in love. Who was the idol of my adoration, I do not now exactly recollect; but I well remember attributing all my pain to a pair of black peepers with which I had somewhere come in contact. For this once, however I was doomed to be mistaken:—

I felt a glowing at my heart,
And thought 'twas Cupid's frolic
To make me feel his keenest dart;
But, oh! it was the cholic.

A dose of peppermint eased my pain, and I soon forgot that I had been afflicted. Happy would it have been for me had it always remained so—but this was but a sham—In future I was to feel the real 'titillatio cordis.'

The fuel of my first flame, was kindled by the sparkling eyes of a young girl, about my own age, who was a school-mate and sat on the same bench with me. I was then about fourteen. At what period I first began to love I could never exactly tell: it came on, in a manner unusual for me—by degrees. I can remember as if it were but yesterday with what fondness I used to loiter around, and seize every occasion for rendering her some little assistance. I neglected my own lesson, at the risk of a whipping, to read her's—I missed many a dinner that I might stay and build her play-houses—and often, when for *myself* I would not have stirred a foot, have I wandered miles, to collect for her, flowers that were handsomer than any that the

other girls could procure. But this fairy dream was not to last long.

One day a boy larger than myself made some remarks which I thought were a reflection upon the charms of my *dulcinea*. I could not endure this—I struck him—a fight ensued, and he beat me most soundly. I flew to my mistress—she consoled with me on account of the bruises which I had received in her cause. She leaned over to examine my 'black eye'—our faces came almost in contact. Never had I yet dared to aspire to the honor of pressing her ruby lips—I could resist no longer—I imprinted a fond and rapturous kiss upon those lips which were uttering such sympathizing, such soul-enrapturing words. It was intended as the seal of love—But heavens what a shock upon my senses. Judge of my disappointment and mortification. It was not 'Araby's spicy gale,' nor was it the delicious, odoriferous zephyrs wafted from Persia's rosy gardens—Onions and Garlic!

What made it still worse, the gentle maiden had now passed the bounds of reserve and not satisfied with one—returned the compliment. Thus at one blast were dissipated all my dreams of bliss—my passion was cooled—and my first love ended in 'a puff of empty air.' But 'it is an ill wind that blows nobody good.'

HARRY.

[FOR THE FOCUS.]

LIBERTY.

"Fortune malim adverse tolerare procellas,
Quam domini ingentis ferre supercilium."

It must be evident, even to the most cursory observer, that throughout the endless gradations of society, and notwithstanding the infinite disparity that has existed between nations, the love of liberty has always been a prominent characteristic in the history of man. The vagrant inhabitants of the Scythian wilds felt no less anxiety for the preservation of their rude independence, and no

less vigorously exerted themselves to maintain inviolate this heavenly boon, when about to be wrested from them by Darius, the proud and imperious king of Persia, than the Greeks, when *their* country was inundated by the myriads of the East. It was the same inherent love of liberty that warmed the breast of Leonidas when he opposed his bold front to the rude surge of war and breathed forth his noble spirit in defence of his liberty; which inspired the champion of American freedom when he hurled the gauntlet in defiance of the oppressive tyranny of a British monarch. And in every case, where the contest is between despotism and freedom, the shout will again be reiterated, "give me liberty or give me death." Yes, the same heavenly, unextinguishable spark has been lighted up in the bosom of man, let him have lived among the burning sands of Africa, or on the bleak mountain tops. It is only after many a manly struggle, and when at last overcome by the strong arm of power, that he can be brought from the free air of his own native hills to breathe the sultry and sickening vapour of slavery. Like the young eagle torn from his native cliff, the wing that would soon have sported above the storm, is enervated in the taming; and the eye that winked not in the broad blaze of day, is dazzled and bleared by the glittering of the very chain that keeps it in bondage.

Whilst the opinions of the world have been continually changing in relation to other matters, and the wildest theories and the most fanciful whims have alternately been sources of furious disputation and strife; the empire of freedom, in the breast of man, has never been revolutionized. While with man—"the religious animal"—every thing, from the vilest reptile that crawls in the mud and slime of the stagnant pool, to the God of nature that "glows in

the stars and blossoms in the trees," has in turn been the revered object of adoration; name but the restoration or the preservation of liberty, and you have a singleness of design and a unanimity of soul. The glow of affection may be quenched; the sun of ambition may set in darkness; hope may be assailed with doubt, and almost every good sentiment of our nature in turn be eradicated; but the love of liberty is so deeply implanted in our breasts that its influence on our actions can never cease but with our existence. And although many may not be able to enumerate the rights it secures; yet wrest it from them and all are deeply sensible of their loss—they are ready to fight for their own, and, "To seal their country's liberty by death." But, if it be irreparably gone, the dignity of human nature sinks into contempt, and its noblest faculties are paralyzed.

Nothing more forcibly strikes us when perusing the pages of history, than the difference in the moral condition of man, where his liberty has been secured and where he has been bereft of this inestimable boon. In the one case, we see him ardent, generous and brave; highly appreciating intellectual improvement, which alone dignifies and ennobles human nature; and in every sense the "noblest work of God." In the other, he is base, degenerate, ignorant and insensible of the noble destiny for which he was created, a foul blot on the fair page of nature. We have an example even in the heathen world, sufficiently strong to illustrate this,—the Greeks, as they existed in the days of their glory. It was this, that invigorated their nerves and steelled their bosoms in the hour of danger. Nothing else could have enabled the Athenians to sustain themselves under the almost desperate expedient of embarking their all on the waves and fleeing for a time the presence of the irresistible

destroyer; until the strength of the invader, was wasted in air, and overcome by the greatness of his exertions, he retired powerless from the land he came to desolate. Under the mild reign of peace and the distribution of equal rights, science was cultivated, the fine arts cherished, and the Athenian state rose to power, wealth and magnificence. And the heavenly rays of science shed a halo of glory around her name, which remains unfaded, while the marble pillars of her Pantheon, and the superb arches of her Museum have crumbled into ruins. At the same period that Greece presented this character, Persia exhibited the very reverse of the picture. The former was a country, at that time, of but comparatively recent foundation; while the latter, had lost its origin in the dark recesses of past ages, and claimed an existence connate with the world itself. A vain, haughty and imperious master was at the head of the government; every thing obeyed the impulse of his nod, and the mightiest lords of the realm were but automaton dancers set in motion at his will. Although wealth and magnificence abounded at the court, and the sa-traps of his provinces lived in the splendor of princes; yet abject indigence and misery characterized the populace. While the shouts of revelry and the song of dissipation reverberated in the halls of state, the agonizing cry of anguish and distress was heard through the vast dominions of the empire. The costly gems which glittered from the dress of a paramour had perhaps been purchased at the expense of a thousand lives; and the delicious draughts quaffed by the parasites of the court, were earned by the sweat and tears of a people broken down by oppression and vilified by slavery. A certain charm may have been cast around the immediate presence of the sovereign that made even slavery supportable; but all who were with-

out this circle must sigh in vain for the hardness of their lot. The alluring glare of royal splendor attracted around it the ephemeral creatures that bask in its sunshine; and it also made the governors of the provinces beggar the subjects, that they might be able to bribe the favor of their sovereign with the tribute which their violence had wrested from the people. The result was, such a system of oppression froze up the genial current of their souls, and they yielded themselves up an unresisting prey to be operated upon as superior force might give the impulse. A proof that they did not feel the dignity of men and the vindictive indignation that fires the breast of patriots when their country is invaded, is the famous retreat of the Ten thousand from the very heart of the empire and the presence of the "Great king;" an exploit that speaks volumes in praise of Grecian management and bravery; and redounds to the everlasting reproach of Persian valor. And how could it be, that the innumerable host, collected from Egypt to the Euxine and from the Indus to the Hellespont, should not have utterly destroyed and trodden into dust the little band of Greece? Can we account for it in any other way, than to conclude, that in all this living mass, the soul that directs and guides was wanting? And where is the literature of this vast empire? They cultivated a knowledge of the soft and effeminate lute, yet the sweets of poesy were scarcely known; and the people who built those magnificent cities, and whose splendid pavillions in war were the wonder of their enemies, for aught we know, were untaught in the sublimity of rhetoric. Strike out of their history, that which has come down to us from their enemies and their story as connected with other nations, and they would scarcely have a name and an existence assigned them on the his-

toric page. This case strongly shows the influence that slavery has on a whole nation; but history abounds in too many examples, and the impression they have on the mind is too vivid, to require fresh excitement.

But if there be need of further illustration, there is a strong and living example before our eyes. Who can, but for a moment, contemplate the degradation and infamy of the negroes in our own country, and not be impressed with commiseration for their lot! Base, degenerate, infamous and vile, they spend their lives in a servitude to which a long continued and unfeeling oppression could alone compel them to submit. Such is their debasement, that white men have blushed to think they were sprung from the same original stock, and have vainly imagined they were some inferior order of beings, formed only to subserve the pride and execute the menial offices of their lordly masters. But the reality is too appalling! I turn from the picture with disgust, and leave the benevolent and humane to devise and execute plans for their amelioration.

JUNIUS.

[FOR THE FOCUS.]

THE WANDERER.

Very Dear Friend:

After having read your very kind letter, in which you speak so handsomely of the important advantages to be derived from traveling, I determined to commence immediately, and pursue it so far as my means would justify. I had often felt severely my own ignorance of the manners and customs of the wide world, when any well informed gentleman chanced to mingle with the innocent and happy parties of our pleasant little village. It was therefore, with feelings of the highest satisfaction, that I left my beloved home, on the following Monday, and commenced rambling with as great

curiosity, and almost as little experience of the world, as had the unhappy Rasselas.

Having rode about fourteen miles, I found myself tracing the banks of the rapid and beautiful Miami. The scenery was such, as, a noble river, lofty forests, and the melody of birds rejoicing in all the glory of spring, can make. You, I know, would have passed along without having your curiosity or feelings the least enlisted; but I was all eye, all ear. Not a rivulet came tumbling from the surrounding hills into the stream below me, but its murmuring sunk into my soul, like the soft melancholy note of the plaintive dove. I saw every meander of the river, and admired its bold sweep. I even greeted with a smile of approbation, every little songster that flitted across my path. Thus, without enquiring of my weary limbs, whether it were time to stop for repose, I rode on till nearly evening; staring about me with as great curiosity, as if I had only received my eyes the day before. At length, the sun having sunk in the west, I was forced to come to a halt.

Here commence my adventures; and you will no doubt laugh at my simplicity. Having stopped at a tavern a man came and took my horse, inviting me, at the same time, very politely to walk into the house. Accordingly I did; and seated myself in a room where there were a half dozen noisy, blustering sons of Belial at full play. Here I sat till my heart ached. In fact, I felt as lonesome as if there had not been another being in the world beside myself. Cowering in all the bashfulness of mama's boy, I thought every person looked and laughed at me. Don't smile my dear Harry, when I tell you I could not muster courage sufficient to call for my supper. Here, with babblers at each elbow, I spent the hours till bed time, as solitary as the famous knight of Juan Fernandez.

Supperless I began to prepare for sleep; and a girl, whose size would justify a guess that she did nothing else but eat, and whose face was as impudent as old mother Hubbard's dog, came up and asked if I wanted to take a bed. Confounded, I blundered out something that meant yes; and she led the way whilst I and another man followed. This man I found, was travelling the same direction that I was, and we agreed to ride in company. He was a jovial fellow, and assisted much to raise my spirits, which had now sunk to rather a low ebb. I was soon cured of my bashfulness, for after an eight miles ride we stopped, and my friend ordered breakfast with as much authority as if he had been master of the world. On this subject I had no more trouble afterwards. But a young man when he first sets out to travel will meet with adventures at every step. At least this was the case with myself, as you will soon see.

At night we found ourselves in the midst of a large town in the southern part of this district, and here I and my companion halted. I took lodgings for two weeks, determined to view all the curiosities of the place. Weariness made me retire early, and when I was fast sinking down in sweet forgetfulness of the chequered scenes through which I had passed for the last two days, my ears were saluted with such a horrible noise and yelling, as they had never heard before. It set at defiance all description; and reminded me instantly of Gammut's jubilee of devils. This concert of superhuman, and to me perfectly original sounds, in a few minutes began to subside, and I could then distinctly hear men talking. Some were condoling over the injuries of an unfortunate sufferer, whilst many were applauding the noble deeds of some daring spirit. The only solution that I could give of these strange occurrences was

that the town was infested at night by fierce wild beasts, and the person so much applauded, at the imminent danger of his life, had snatched some one from the jaws of these monsters. In the morning I asked the gentleman with whom I lodged, what kind of animals those were which caused such an uproar in the town, and whether they were apt to kill people. Bursting into a loud laugh, he told me they were not molested by any animals worse than the people themselves, he believed; and that what I heard, must have been at Doctor R——'s, who keeps the Hot-hell (I think he called it) just over the way. "We had a meeting last night," said he, "for the purpose of selecting a candidate, to support at the ensuing election; and I suppose some of the people got a little out of sorts in the upper story, (as they say) and perhaps had a few dry blows; If you please, we will walk over to the Doctor's, and learn the particulars."

Upon entering the house, I observed a number of men sitting, and lying round the room, who from appearance I took to be the Doctor's patients. "What's the matter, candidate?" said my conductor to a man lying on a bench, his face all black and bruised, and looking like anything in the world rather than a candidate for time at least. "Oh!" said the Doctor, "he had rather a bad affray last night, I suppose *he* thinks; but I believe it to be one of the best symptoms his case has ever afforded." But, what's the matter of *this* man, said I turning to one who had fallen down under the bench. "That man," said he, "was seized, a few years since with an illness all over his limbs, which occasioned a consumption of the purse." He applied to me for relief, and, poor fellow, I think he will shortly be out of trouble.' Here, my feelings were so much agitated that I scarcely knew what I did. In this confusion, I hastily asked whether his disease was

catching or not. He said, it was;—'that any person being with his patients a short time were *sure* to catch it.' This completed my affright. I left the town immediately and returned home, very happy in having escaped the jaws of this direful monster tenfold more cruel than any wild beast.

But, think not, my friend, that I am disgusted with travelling. I intend to set out again to-morrow in a different direction, and will not fail to give you a full account of my adventures, so soon as I return.

Your very sincere friend.

DR. FRANKLIN.

The leading property of Dr. Franklin's mind—great as it was—the faculty, which made him remarkable, and set him apart from other men;—the generator, in truth, of all his power—was *GOOD SENSE*—only plain, good sense—nothing more. He was not a man of genius; there was no brilliancy about him; little or no fervor; nothing like poetry, or eloquence; and yet—by the sole, untiring, continual operation of this humble unpretending quality of the mind; he came to do more, in the world of science; more, in council; more, in the cabinets of Europe; more, in the revolution of empires, (uneducated—or self-educated, as he was,) than five hundred others might have done; each with more genius; more fervor; more eloquence; and more brilliancy.

He was born of English parents, in Boston, Massachusetts, New-England, about 1706, we believe. When a lad, he ran away to Philadelphia. After a long course of self-denial, hardship, and wearying disappointment, which nothing but his frugal, temperate, courageous good sense carried him through, he came to be—successively, —a journeyman printer, (or pressman, rather, on account of his great bodily strength,) —in a London printing-office; —editor and publisher, at home, in Philadelphia, of many papers, which had a prodigious influence on the temper of his countrymen; agent, for certain colonies, to this government; —an author of celebrity; —a philosopher, whose reputation has gone over the whole of the learned world—continually increasing, as it went; a very able negotiator; —a statesman; —a minister plenipotentiary to France, of whose king he obtained, while the Bourbons were in their glory—by his great moderation, wisdom and republican address, a treaty, which enabled our thirteen colonies of North America to laugh all the power of Great Britain, year after year, to scorn;—yes—and all these things, did

Benjamin Franklin, by virtue alone, of his *GOOD COMMON SENSE*.

He died, in 1790, "full of years, and of honors;" the pride and glory of that empire, the very foundations of which, he had assisted in laying;—the very corner stone of which, he had helped into the appointed place, with his own powerful hands. He was one of the few—the priesthood of liberty—that stood up, undismayed, unmoved, while the ark of *THEIR* salvation thundered, and shook, and lightened in their faces;—putting all of them, their venerable hands upon it, nevertheless; and abiding the issue, while the "*DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE*" went forth, like the noise of trumpets, to the four corners of the earth. He lived, until he heard a warlike flourish echoing through all the great solitudes of America—the roar of battle, on every side of him—all Europe in commotion—her over-peopled empires riotous with a new spirit—his country quietly taking her place among the nations. What more could he wish?—Nothing. It was time to give up the ghost.

He was a great—and, of course—a good man. We have but few things to lay, seriously, to his charge—very few: and, after all, when we look about us; recollecting, as we do, the great good which he has done, *EVERY WHERE*; the little mischief that he has *DONE*—the less than little, that he ever meditated *ANY WHERE*—in all his life—to the cause of humanity—we have no heart—we confess it—again to speak unkindly of him. The evil that Benjamin Franklin did, in the whole of his fourscore years—and upwards of life—was, in comparison with his good works, but as dust in the balance.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINB. MAG.

* The very press, at which he worked, is now in the possession of Messrs. Cox and Baylis—Great Queen's Street, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields—near the place where Dr. F. worked.

HUMAN LIFE.

How change our days, not oftener doth its hue
The lank camelion change, than we our
joys,—

The hope that feeds upon our hearts destroys;

Little is done while much remains to do;

We fix our eyes on phantoms, and pursue;

We chase the airy bubbles of the brain;
We leave for Fancy's lures the fixed and true;

Destroy what time hath spared, and build again.

Years o'er us pass, and Age, that comes to few,

Comes but to tell them they have lived in vain!

Sin blights—Death scatters—Hope misleads
Thought errs—

Joy's icicles melt down before the sun—
And, ere the ebbing sands of life be run,
Another generation Earth prefers!

[There is something extremely touching, in this extract from the pen of Washington Irving. He has succeeded—where most writers have failed—in divesting the thoughts of the grave of every association that is dismal or gloomy. The composition is marked with that ‘purity of sentiment, and unaffected elegance of thought’ which eminently distinguishes his writings. No far-fetched allusions, no studied imagery, no labored diction; but all is feeling, tenderness and pathos.]

“The grave is the ordeal of true affection. It is there that the divine passion of the soul manifests its superiority to the instinctive impulse of mere animal attachment. The latter must be continually refreshed and kept alive by the presence of its object; but the love that is seated in the soul can live on long remembrance. The mere inclinations of sense languish and decline with the charms which excited them, and turn with shuddering and disgust from the dismal precincts of the tomb; but it is thence that truly spiritual affection rises purified from every sensual desire, and returns, like a holy flame, to illumine and sanctify the heart of the survivor.

The sorrow for the dead is the only sorrow from which we refuse to be divorced. Every other wound we seek to heal—every other affliction to forget; but this wound we consider it a duty to keep open—this affliction we cherish and brood over in solitude. Where is the mother who would willingly forget the infant that perished like a blossom from her arms, though every reflection is a pang? Where is the child that would willingly forget the most tender of parents, though to remember be but to lament? Who, even in the hour of agony, would forget the friend over whom he mourns? Who, even when the tomb is closing upon the remains of her he most loved; when he feels his heart, as it were, crushed in the closing of its portal; would accept of consolation that must be bought by forgetfulness?—No, the love which survives the tomb is one of the noblest attributes of the soul. If it has its woes, it has likewise its delights; and when the overwhelming burst of grief is calmed into the gentle tear of recollection; when the sudden anguish and the convulsive agony over the present ruins of all that we most loved, is softened away into pensive meditation on all that it was in the days of its loveliness—who would root out such a sorrow from the heart? Though it may sometimes throw a passing cloud over the bright hour of gaiety; or spread a deeper sadness over the hour of gloom; yet who would exchange it even for the song of pleasure, or the burst of revelry? No there is a voice from the tomb sweeter than song. There is a remembrance of the dead to which we turn even from the charms

of the living. Oh the grave!—the grave!—It buries every error—covers every defect—extinguishes every resentment! From its peaceful bosom spring none but fond regrets and tender recollections. Who can look down upon the grave even of an enemy, and not feel a compunctious throb, that he should ever have warred with the poor handful of earth that lies mouldering before him.

But the grave of those we loved—what a place for meditation! There it is that we call up in long review the whole history of virtue and gentleness, and the thousand endearments lavished upon us almost unheeded in the daily intercourse of intimacy;—There it is that we dwell upon the tenderness, the solemn, awful tenderness of the parting scene. The bed of death, with all its stifled griefs—its noiseless attendance—its mute, watchful assiduities. The last testimonies of expiring love! The feeble, fluttering, thrilling, oh! how thrilling!—pressure of the hand. The last fond look of the glazing eye, turning upon us even from the threshold of existence. The faint, faltering accents, struggling in death to give one more assurance of affection!

Ay, go to the grave of buried love, and meditate! There settle the account with thy conscience for every past benefit unrequited—every past endearment unregarded, of that departed being, who can never—never—never return to be soothed by thy contrition!

If thou art a child, and hast ever added a sorrow to the soul, or a furrow to the silvered brow of an affectionate parent—if thou art a husband, and hast ever caused the fond bosom that ventured its whole happiness in thy arms, to doubt one moment of thy kindness or thy truth—if thou art a friend, and hast ever wronged, in thought, or word, or deed, the spirit that generously confided in thee—if thou art a lover, and hast ever given one unmerited pang to that true heart which now lies cold and still beneath thy feet;—then be sure that every unkind look, every ungracious word, every ungentle action, will come thronging back upon thy memory, and knocking dolefully at thy soul—then be sure that thou wilt lie down sorrowing and repentant on the grave, and utter the unheard groan, and pour the unavailing tear—more deep, more bitter, because unheard and unavailing.

Then weave thy chaplet of flowers, and strew the beauties of nature about the grave; console thy broken spirit if thou canst, with these tender, yet futile tributes of regret;—but take warning by the bitterness of this thy contrite affliction over the dead, and henceforth be more faithful and affectionate in the discharge of thy duties to the living.

A tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edge-tool that grows keener with constant use.

THE LITERARY FOCUS.

OXFORD, 6. DECEMBER, 1827.

Talk not of dying; I am out of fear
Of death, or death's hand, for this half year.
SHAKESPEARE.

BEN.—Frythee, friend Harry, how do you
like my new dress? Don't you think
I'll cut a dash?

HARRY.—Oh! passable, passable, Ben. But
REMEMBER, you are going amongst those
who will pay more attention to sense than
fashions. You have your cue, so conduct
yourself accordingly. MS. PLAY.

As conductors of a literary periodical, we cannot help observing the changes, with regard to works of this kind, which are continually taking place around us. HERE, a paper of long standing, all at once fails, for want of support; and THERE, a new one springs up in its stead. HERE, to gratify a thirst for information and an increased refinement of taste in its readers, a political recorder takes the form of a literary gazette; and THERE, where politics more than science, and the claims of the different presidential candidates more than the march of mind engage the attention of community, the order is reversed—a scientific journal is degraded into a medium for mutual recrimination, and made subservient to the purposes of party spirit. Ephemeral productions are every day making their appearance, which bask, for a short season, in the warm sun-shine of patronage, and then sink forgotten into obscurity. Amidst all these fluctuations, ours has numbered its seventh month, and with prospects more flattering than we could before boast or anticipate, we bid our patrons “a happy Christmas and a merry New-Year.”

In this number, we present ourselves to the public in a new garb, and under different auspices. Aided by the generous friends of the institution, the Societes have been enabled to procure a press and its appurtenances of their own, which is now in successful operation, within the College edifice. And hoping for an enlarged patronage and trusting in our ability to accomplish the undertaking, we have been induced to make an addition of half a sheet to the former size. Each number will now consist of 24 pages; and this, in conjunction with the difference

of type, will make our paper contain nearly twice the quantity of matter that formerly occupied its pages. This increase of room will be principally supplied, by choice selections. But, as our object is improvements the amount of ORIGINAL composition will continue at least the same, and, in cases of equal merit, shall always have the preference. But the claims of originality alone shall never entitle a piece, of inferior merit, to exclude a good extract—Convinced, as we are, that it is better to cull a flower from the garden of ANOTHER, than to raise an ill-looking weed in our own,—it is an unwarrantable prejudice that would ALWAYS prompt to prefer an indigenuous shrub to an exotic.

No person, we feel convinced, has been less blind than ourselves, to the many inaccuracies which have heretofore existed in our work. These inaccuracies, as we observed in our last, have been, in most cases, unavoidable; and we must request our indulgent friends to suffer them to be buried in forgetfulness. For the general character of the style and matter, whatever may be its merits or blemishes, we ourselves are responsible; and situated as we now are, we will, in future, also answer for the mechanical appearance and typographical correctness of the publication.

It has been our endeavor not to make the Focus a mawkish repository of insipid affectation of style and artificial sentiment; nor have we aimed at eminence, by pertness of wit, or the excitement of pleasantry;—believing, that not even success, in either of these, would meet with the approbation of the discriminating. But our wish has been to blend instruction with amusement—to render our columns a vehicle of useful knowledge—and to add our mite to the general stock of intelligence. In this we may not ALWAYS have succeeded; but we can safely say, that the failure has not been owing to the want of an attempt. And if our accomplishment has fallen short of our desire, we have the satisfaction of reflecting that we fail in a good cause. Many of our pieces may be found to want the tinsel of ornament, and the finer graces of composition; but in all such cases, we believe it will appear that there is something of worth in the sentiment; or of force in the argument, which makes them deserving of an insertion. If our essays do not furnish ma-

nifestations of profound research, and closely accurate investigation, they yet give evidence that, though we are young, we THINK and are desirous of eliciting the truth. And if our writings are not enriched by the gifts of mind in its maturity, they may yet assist in the developement of dormant talent. And when those who now contribute to our columns, shall be launched into active life, and engaged in the business of the various stations to which Providence may assign them, we trust that they will acknowledge this little work, to have been the nurse of intellect, and a hot-bed to ripen the fruits of genius.

LITERARY PIRACY appears to be the prevailing theme for Editorial contention. We do not desire to enter into the lists with any of our brethren of the press; but we can see no harm, after making our best bow to the Editor of the Augusta Herald, in asking him where he met with the short essay entitled "INDEPENDENCE OF MIND" which appeared in his 47th No.

Under the expectation of an increase in the length of our subscription list, we make no additional charge for the enlargement and improvement of our work. New subscribers can still be furnished with all the preceding numbers, if it is their desire to have their files complete.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"Florian's" poetic effusion is inadmissible: "'Tis like the forced gate of a shuffling nag."

"The Sylvan Grove" "towers" far above our comprehension; Thompson's Seasons read better in the original version—a little less froth and bombast, and a great deal more sound sense, and the author will do well.

"Titus" is under consideration; it is only owing to mistake that he has not received earlier attention.

The author of the "Notes on the Miami Country" has discovered some errors in the 7th No. which are undergoing correction: This precludes the possibility of its appearance this month.

[FOR THE FOCUS.]

THE BUDGET, NO. 1.

FROM MY ELBOW CHAIR.

Excessively fatigued with study one evening, I threw myself carelessly into my arm-chair, and soon was received into the soft embraces of Morpheus; sleep was quickly followed by his fantastic visionary companion, Somnus, the inventor of dreams; under their joint influence I was hurried on through the most whimsical scenes.

I thought it was on one of those beautiful evenings, in the month of May, when the serenity of the skies, the mildness of the atmosphere, and the stillness of every thing around seemed to indicate that the angry elements had all, by some secret concert, sunk into repose. I recollect it well, for there was something so remarkable in the whole scenery that it made a lasting impression upon my mind. I took a stroll with one of my most agreeable companions, who soon became gloomy and uncommunicative. At length our unconscious wanderings brought us near Mr. ——'s, where we improved a convenient seat to rest our weary limbs. I had fallen into a musing mood myself, about what, it is immaterial, and my friend, contrary to his usual sprightly and thoughtless habits, seemed also absorbed in deep thought; his brow, while his eye seemed wandering vacantly without pursuing any distinct object, knit itself, ever and anon, as though his mind was in deep perplexity in unravelling some knotty chain of reasoning, or solving some great doubt, and then again his whole countenance would assume the most perfect composure.

I sketch from nature; for unperceived by him, I marked him well, there was something so uncommon in his appearance, that I stretched my utmost scrutiny to discover the secret movings of such unusually intense

thought, but in vain. Unwilling to disturb him, though it was drawing near the hour, as I thought, for us to meet an appointment of a very interesting nature, I let him indulge in his meditations which seemed to give him, alternately, the strongest sensations now of pleasure and then of pain—at one moment his countenance would be lit up with a brightness almost inconceivable, and quick as thought it would be overshadowed with a cloud of the deepest melancholy and gloom. After my companion had indulged himself in this extraordinary manner until I had become quite weary waiting for him and was just in the act of taking him by the elbow and saying, "friend let's be going," he, without raising his eyes from the ground, upon which they had been earnestly fixed for several moments, stared as though his wandering mind had just returned from some visionary excursion to his apparently senseless body, and, at the same instant, with the wildness of a man just rousing from a profound reverie, said, "three nights ago I had a dream, and dreamed that I saw a strange lady of the most engaging appearance that I ever saw in my waking hours, and———." As he was pronouncing the last word he raised his eyes and turned them in the direction in which I stood;—for I had become so interested in his appearance and situation, that I had, unconsciously, left my seat, which was several paces from him, and was standing near his right elbow—as he glanced his eyes in that direction, I saw him blush; his countenance pale and romantic as it was when he commenced with solemn air to repeat the words of his dreams, at this instant, became suffused with crimson, his blood receiving some great revolution from the heart, was thrown to the surface, and seemed willing to escape through the pores of his face; his eyes brightened up with fire, and his whole appearance beamed with

joy and delight. He continued looking in the same direction, and became more and more interested as he gazed, and, without continuing to relate his dream as I expected, or proposing to return as I wished, he arose with trepidation and confusion, and walked slowly and hesitatingly in the same direction. I cast my eyes that way and saw a young lady, on horseback and alone, riding from that direction towards where my friend had been musing. Just before he met her, and near where I then stood—for I had slowly pursued him—the young lady reigned up her horse at the lighting place near Mr. ——'s house. My friend made a low bow, as the noble horse stopped, and, with more than his usual grace and insinuating manner, asked if he should "have the pleasure of helping her from her horse"—the lady hesitated—she seemed strangely confused—I had then arrived so near as to observe every feature distinctly—the evening sun was shining full in her face, for he was just sitting, and seemed anxious to make a glance of her fair face, and of this extraordinary meeting his last leave of the day—my friend bowed again—she nodded permission—he helped her from her horse, handed her to the door, and as she entered he drew from his pocket book and placed in her hands, a billet, with these remarkable words on it, "To the most beautiful, accomplished and fascinating lady whom I saw three days ago in my dream." The lady thanked him in the most elegant and engaging manner for his politeness in helping her from her horse; a complimentary ceremony which he returned in a suitable style, and as he made one of his most sweeping bows on taking leave of her, I made an unusual low nod in my chair, lost the centre of gravity, and, with a little assistance from this same mischievous friend of whom I had just been dreaming, found myself prostrated at full length upon the

floor, which cut short the thread of my friend's happiness, and no little discomfited that prominent feature of the human face—my NOSE.

[FOR THE FOCUS.]

It may be fanciful, but we have a particular affection for the New Moon in the twilight of a summer evening. There is something inexpressibly soothing, yet elevating in that quietness which prevails around, that insensibly leads the thoughts upward; and the slight crescent of light but adds to the beauty of that calm, soft coloring which is diffused over the face of our heavenly visitant. At such times it is that the soul is raised above what is earthly, and exults in the hope of her high destiny. "*Erigimur, elevationes fieri videmur.*" The mild, inviting appearance of the moon, with its outlines so distinctly defined, causes us to imagine her to be the habitation of blessed spirits, who dwell in tranquility and peace; and we long to be at rest.

There is a loveliness, as well as sublimity, even in the inanimate works of creation; and we envy not the man who does not feel himself wiser and better from their contemplation. The very sight of the vast planetary bodies rushing onward in solemn silence, through the wide expanse, impresses us with a feeling that partakes both of the awful and pleasurable: and when we remember that from "the beginning of days" these mis-called wanderers have been revolving continually and inerringly in their courses, the thought must awaken in our minds grand but inadequate conceptions of that Being, whose will is the stability of nature. But immense power and energy, however well adapted to excite in us emotions of terror and astonishment, do not affect our minds so agreeably, nor so permanently as that intelligence which is displayed throughout the universe;—from suns and worlds to the grass beneath our

feet, it embraces all. There is something in us, which is responsive to those proclamations of the existence of a Supreme and Ruling Mind, which are inscribed in letters of light upon God's works; and the soul is filled with "a glorying and sense of inward greatness," by a consciousness of her ability to read the characters of the Divine name. These are felt to be enjoyments worthy of her immortal nature; and the few brief moments which have been thus redeemed from the debasing gratifications of sense, are remembered as green spots amid the burning sands of the desert.

The simple, comprehensive unity of plan, which is visible in the celestial movements, is that which most forcibly strikes the beholder; and we suppose that most persons delight to recall the thrill of pleasure which was felt in every vein, when the truth first burst upon their minds that the same unvaried law pervades immensity;—governing the motions of all the heavenly bodies;—no system of unconnected parts, but the same uniform principle reigning throughout the whole. Then the phrase "the music of the spheres," scarcely appeared to be figurative language.

But when we turn our attention to the organized and living part of creation, it is the endless variety, which every where meets the eye, that charms the observer, and furnishes in rich profusion the most exhilarating sensations. Colors and forms and movements in all their varied combinations, present an exhaustless fund of enjoyment, and the eye wanders from object to object, too restless from the surrounding attractions, to remain fixed on any. However beautiful the forms and variegated the shades of coloring of the mineral kingdom, vegetable life is exalted far above them in rank and excellence, and deserves our admiration not merely as existing, but as possessing the power of continuing and as it were renewing existence;

We look upon plants as one step nearer to our own nature, and as having some degree of sensibility: and we are gladdened not only by vivid changing hues, but sweets are born on every gale, and the effect of the whole is heightened by the grace of motion. How monotonous would be the appearance of trees and plants and herbage, were they to stand erect and motionless! There is not a more pleasing sight than the undulating surface of a rich meadow, the slender spires of grass yielding to the light wings of the wind; and the tall flowers and lilies which here and there rise above their humble attendants, bending their proud heads as the breeze sweeps by. There is music even in the hollow murmurs of defiance of the aged oak when strained by the blast: and the graceful wavings of the loftier trees of the forest give life and animation to the scene. Yet all these gratifications and a thousand others are but the overflowings of the Creator's bounty; since man might have existed and have performed the different duties of life, without the brightening of every thing which he approaches, to receive him with smiles of joy and gladness.

"Not content with every food of life to
nourish man,

Thou mak'st all nature beauty to his
eye or music to his ear."

"Is it not desirable?" then "to call the soul from the feverish agitation of worldly pursuits, to the contemplation of Divine Wisdom in the beautiful economy of nature? Is it not a privilege to walk with God in the garden of creation and hold converse with his providence?" Such joys are pure and ennobling. They are worthy of a rational being, and those who are content with meaner things, never experience the highest, holiest happiness, of which their nature is susceptible.

MATHEMATICAL.

[We invite the attention of mathematicians, particularly of other Colleges, to the following problem.]

Given, two points unequally distant from a right line also given in position: required, to construct an isosceles triangle with the base parallel to the given line, the vertex in that line, and the equal sides passing through the given points, with a demonstration.

[The following short extract from a book entitled "Letters from Washington on the Constitution and Laws; with Sketches of the Prominent Public Characters of the United States. Written during the winter of 1817-18. By a Foreigner.": is elegantly written, and gives (we think,) as briefly as possible, a true and impartial character of the illustrious Washington.]

From an attentive perusal of the American history, and a close examination of the character of Washington, it appears to me that the principal faculty of his mind was judgment, which always led him to avoid the dangers of precipitancy, and the errors which sometimes result from a more vivid and brilliant imagination. The dictates of that judgment constituted the line of his conduct, which was, of course, marked with the most consummate prudence. This virtue never seems to have deserted him either as a statesman or a warrior, in a public or a private capacity. His prudence and caution were particularly observable in his military career, and, like Pericles, he never willingly came to an engagement when the danger was considerable, and the success very uncertain; nor did he envy the glory, or imitate the conduct of those generals, who are admired and applauded, because their rash enterprises have been attended with success. He had many difficulties to encounter, but these difficulties he readily surmounted. Patriotism animated, and prudence conducted him to tri-

umph. With a limited education, and little patronage, he paved his way to greatness, and by his virtues, cast a blaze of glory around his character, that time can only increase, and that posterity must contemplate, with enthusiasm and rapture. There is no parallel for such a man in the annals of the world; so singular a combination of virtues, with so few vices; such disinterested patriotism, and unimpeachable integrity, with so many temptations to swerve, and so many inducements to betray, were never before united. Immovable in the hour of danger, no difficulties could shake, no terrors appal him. He was always the same, in the glare of prosperity, and in the gloom of adversity. Like Fabricius, he could not be moved from the paths of virtue and honor, and like Epaminondas, he made every thing bend to the interest of his country. His country was his idol, and patriotism the predominant feeling of his mind. Personal aggrandisement and individual resentment and interest, were alike sacrificed to this overwhelming passion, which no difficulty could weaken, and no neglect destroy. Washington was reserved, without being haughty; religious, without being bigotted; great in all stations, and sublime in all his actions, whether he moved in the sphere of domestic obscurity, or employed his energies in wielding the destinies of his country. Antiquity would have made him a God; posterity will make him more. Every nation can boast of its heroes, its statesmen, and its bards, but there are few that have produced their Washingtons. He stands alone in the history of the world, and will be venerated while virtue and patriotism have an influence on human action.

EARLY PRINTING.

When the art of printing was first discovered, the printers only made use of one side of a page; they had not yet found out the expedient of impressing the other. When their editions were intended to be curious,

they omitted printing the first letter of a chapter, for which they left a blank space, that it might be painted or illuminated, at the option of the purchaser. Several ancient volumes of these early times have been found, where these letters are wanting, as they neglected to have them printed. When the art of printing was first established, it was the glory of the learned to be the correctors of the press to the eminent printers; physicians, lawyers, and bishops themselves, occupied this department. The printers then added frequently to their names, those of the correctors of the press, and editions were valued according to the abilities of the corrector,

—“To let their fame

Live registered in our printed books.”

The first book printed in the English tongue, was *THE RECUEILL OF THE HISTORY OF TROY*, and is dated September 19, 1471, at Cologne; but *THE GAME OF CHESS* is allowed by all the typographical antiquaries to have been the first specimen of the art.

The early printers used to affix, at the end of the volumes which they printed, some device or couplet, concerning the work, with the addition of the name of the printer. In the edition of the “*Pragmatic Sanction*,” printed by Andrew Bocard, at Paris, in 1507, the following handsome couplet is inserted:

“*Stet liber hic donec fluctus formica marinos*

Ebibat; et totum testudo perambulet orbem.”

Which may be thus translated:

“May this volume continue in motion,

And its pages each day be unfurld;

Till an ant has drank up the ocean,

Or a tortoise has crawl'd round the world.”

PERCY ANECDOTES.

A young clergyman, in reply to the question “What success in the ministry?” said, “I have brought over all my congregation to *faith* and *repentance*.” “How so?” says the interrogator. “Why, sir, they have strong *faith* in my incapacity, and bitterly *repent* that they ever employed me.”

A student of medicine from Boston, while attending lectures in London, observed that the “King’s evil had been but little known in the U. States since the Revolution.”

A learned *Soph* of ——— college, *very seriously* asked one of his fellows “if Dr. Johnson was not the *author of Shakspeare*?”

POETIC DEPARTMENT.



"A few indifferent rhymes, and some poetical blemishes (in a critical view) may be observed; but as we should not break butterflies on the wheel, so neither ought we to dissect nightingales."—LON. LIT. GAZ.

[FOR THE FOCUS.]

SILENT KISSES.

We will breathe not a kiss to the tell-tale air
Nor proclaim the fond triumph for others to share.

For the rose never speaks when it ope's to the dew,
And lovers say little whose feelings are true.
The soul-speaking eyes are the language of blisses,
And with eyes we will speak and with sweet silent kisses.

'Tis silence gives soul to the beauty of night,
'Tis silence keeps secrets, the lovers delight,
The stream moves in silence, where still is its breast,
The willows fair leaves hang like kisses at rest.
The heart throbs in silence—and we in our blisses
Will honor its feelings by sweet silent kisses.

Yes, when our lips move, yet have nothing to say,
And our eyes in each other's warm beams fade away,
'Tis then that I feel all the force of thy charms,
And pleasures ecstatic with thee in my arms.
O! never let ear rob a part of our blisses,
O! all for the heart be our sweet silent kisses.

N.

[FOR THE FOCUS.]

STANZAS.

I seized my brush, and bade it paint
The hue that tinges Anna's cheek—
Methought I heard a murmuring plaint:
For hues like those 'tis vain to seek.

My brush I dropp'd—then gazed again,
To see if what I heard was true;
And that my skill indeed was vain,
By one short glance I quickly knew.

Then if the beauties of that face
Can thus all human arts defy,

'T would take an angel's self to trace
The soul that sparkles in that eye.

If caskets of the costliest kind
Contain those gems most pure and rare,
What are the treasures of a mind
Which animates a form so fair?

MERVYN

[From the London Literary Souvenir.]

TO A DEAD EAGLE.

It is a desolate eve;
Dim, cheerless is the scene my path around;
Patters the rain; the breeze-stirred forests
grieve;
And wails the stream with melancholy sound
While at my feet, behold,
With vigorous talons clenched, and bright
eye shut,
With proud curved beak, and wiry plum-
age bold
Thou liest, dead eagle of the desert, but
Preserving yet in look thy tameless mood,
As if, though stilled by death, thy heart
were unsubdued.

How can'st thou to thy death?
Did lapsing years o'ercome, and leave thee
weak,—
Or whirlwinds on thy heaven descending
path,
Dash thee against the precipice's peak?—
'Mid rack and floating cloud
Did scythe-winged lightning flash athwart
thy brain,
And drive thee from thine elevation proud,
Down whirling lifeless to the dim-seen plain?
I know not—may not guess; but here, alone,
Lifeless thou liest outstretched beside the
desert stone.

A proud life hath been thine:
High on the herbless rock thou 'wok'st to
birth,
And, gazing down, saw far beneath the
shine,
Outstretched, horizon girt, the maplike earth.
What rapture must have gushed
Warm round thy heart, when first thy wings
essay'd,
Adventurously, their heavenward flight,
and rushed
Up towards day's blazing eye-star undis-
may'd,—
Above thee space's vacancy unfurled,
And, far receded down, the dim material
world!

How fast—how far—how long
Thine had it been from rack-veiled cyrie
high
To swoop, and still the woodlark's lyric
song,
The leveret's gambols, and the lambkin's
cry?
The terror stricken love
Cowered down amid the oak-wood's central
shade;

While ferny glens below, and cliffs above,
To thy fierce shriek responsive echo made,
Carrying the wild alarm from vale to vale,
That thou, the forest king, wert out upon
the gale!

When downward glen's were dark,
And o'er moist earth glowed morning's rosy
star,

High o'er the scarce-tinged clouds 'twas
thine to mark

The orient chariot of the sun afar:

And, oh! how grand to soar
Beneath the full moon, on strong pinion
driven;

To pierce the regions of grey cloudland
o'er,

And drift amid the star-isled seas of heaven!
Even like a courier sent from earth to hold
With space-discovered worlds unawed com-
munion bold.

Dead king-bird of the waste!
And is thy curbless span of freedom o'er?

No more shall thine ascending form be
traced?

And shall the hunter of the hills no more
Hark to thy regal cry?

While 'spiring o'er the stream-girt vales,
thy form,

Lessening, commingles with the azure sky,
Glimpsed 'mid the masses of the gathering
storm,

As if it were thy proud resolve to see
Betwixt thee and dim earth the zig-zag
lightnings flee!

A child of freedom thou,—
Thy birthright the tall cliff and sky beyond:
Thy feet were fetterless; thy fearless brow
Ne'er quailing, tyrant man's dominion
owned.

But Nature's general law
The slave and freeman must alike obey:
Pride reels; and Power, that kept a world
in awe.

The dreadful summons hears;—and where
are they?

Vanished, like night dreams from the sleep-
er's mind,

Dusk 'mid dissolving day, or thunder on
the wind!

THE WORLD.

THERE is a tumult in the wilderness—

Behold, with fiery breath the fierce Simoom
Rushes resistless onward, death and gloom
Darkening behind it in their dreariness!

It is the witherer of beauty, lo!

Strength and the powers of life abide it not,
Each living thing sinks down upon the spot
Lifeless, with all the leaves on every bough!

Thus is it with that many-headed thing,

The monstrous world, which, passing o'er
the mind

Of unsuspecting Youth, leaves nought behind
Except the shadowy darkness of its wing,

And Guilt, and writhing Anguish; Hope
can bring
No balsam, nor can Life a succour find.

Books.—At the head of all the pleasures which offer themselves to the man of liberal education, may confidently be placed that of books. In variety, durability, and facility of attainment, no other can stand in competition with it; and even in intensity it is inferior to few. Imagine that we had it in our power to call up the shades of the greatest and wisest men that ever existed, and oblige them to converse with us on the most interesting topics—what inestimable privilege should we think it! how superior to all common enjoyments! But in a well furnished library, we in fact possess, this power. We can question Xenophon and Caesar on their campaigns, make Demosthenes and Cicero plead before us, join in the audience of Socrates and Plato, and receive demonstrations from Euclid and Newton. In books we have the choicest thoughts, of the ablest men, in their best dress. We can at pleasure exclude dullness and impertinence, and open our doors to wit and good sense alone. No apparatus, no appointment of time and place, is necessary for the enjoyment of reading. From the midst of bustle and business, you may, in an instant, by the magic of a book, plunge into scenes of remote ages and countries, and disengage yourself from present care and fatigue.—Sweet pliability of man's spirit, that can at once surrender itself to illusions, which cheat expectation and sorrow of their weary moments.

AGENTS

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